

## City of Fitchburg Disability Commission Meeting

Date	June 8, 2016
Location	Library Garden Room

### Commission Members:

Name	Present	Absent	Remote
Jeffrey Wolfgang	X		
Bill Tolos	X		
Doris Matte	X		
Mary Ann Guichard	X		
Sheela Tallamraju	X		
Sharon Tardiff	X		

Guest: Amy LeBlanc, Nick Carbone, Carolyn Quirk, Kathleen Hamelin.

Meeting commenced at 10:15 a.m. Three guests in today's meeting are interested in becoming members of the Disability Commission- Nick Carbone, Carolyn Quirk, and Kathy Hamelin.

**Item 1:** Jeff Wolfgang went over the minutes from April 13, 2016. Motion Passes to accept the minutes.

Jeff went over notices and announcements that were happening in the city of Fitchburg for June. Sharon announced DPW Day on Broad Street- Date: 06/08/2016 from 2:00 PM- 5:00PM.

**Item 2:** Accessible Playgrounds and Equipment: Amy went to the planning meeting of the Sam Pawlak accessible community playground at Coolidge Park. The planning committee is working on fundraising for the playground. We will provide more information on the playground in our next meeting. A link to their website will be posted in our minutes for families to contribute to this noble cause.

**Item 3:** Housing /Wallace Towers:

The hole in the elevator of the building is fixed. There is a pothole in front of the building and Jeff is planning to meet the director of the housing authority to address the problem. As far as emergencies- Fire and Police, departments do not have ladders to access the higher floors. The ladder for the fire department only goes to 102 feet. In real distance, the ladder can go up to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. The Police and Fire Departments do not have information on where people with mobility impairments live in the building. Jeff will try to advocate with the police and Fire departments in collaboration with the housing authority to come up with a plan to help the Police and Fire departments to have emergency information for people with disabilities living in that building. Doris, Guich & Nick will assist Jeff in this process. The commission is planning to invite the new housing authority director. The commission would like to assure them of our support and would love to work in collaboration with the housing authority.

**Item 4:** Education/ Subcommittee - SPED. The last day of school is June 15<sup>th</sup>

The commission talked about the collaboration with the public schools at the disability fair, and the help given by the students and the administration of the public schools.

**Item 5:** Curb Cuts: Jeff has not heard back from Lenny after their meeting in May. Lenny will investigate the problem areas brought to his attention. Jeff met with Lenny & Gary Withington along with Maryann Guichard and Bill Tolos.

The following issues were brought to their attention:

Main/Mechanic/Prospect Intersection-

- Prospect St- Curb cut is “ragged” near 1-3 Prospect St. DPW will look at it and repair as required.
- Parking at 18 Mechanic St obstructs vision of vehicles heading down Mechanic to Main. Earlier this week, the City Solicitor asked the Building Commissioner to issue a “cease and desist” order to the owners of 18 Mechanic regarding driveway because it does not meet Zoning ordinance (setbacks).
- Vehicles turning right on red at end of Mechanic present a hazard to people crossing Prospect in wheel chairs. Is it legal to turn right on red? If so, can this be changed? DPW will investigate.
- There is inadequate clearance for wheel chairs between the traffic signal control box and utility pole near 18 Mechanic St. DPW will investigate, but there is no easy solution, as it might involve property takings, reconfiguring the curb line to create more space, relocating control box or pole, etc.
- Sidewalks on Prospect St are in poor condition. DPW will investigate.
- Daniels St- Sidewalks heaved by tree roots, making it impossible for wheel chairs to pass. DPW looked at this today. We found four hazardous city trees adjacent to St Joseph’s Church parking lot that should be removed, as well as the stumps and existing sidewalk. New sidewalk will be built where required. DPW will do this as time and budget allows.
- Curb cut on Daniels St at former McDonalds has a hazardous gap. DPW will look at this and repair as required.
- Holy Trinity Greek Church- No curb cut on Main St near church parking lot across from church. DPW looked at this and will install ramp/curb cut.
- No curb cut on Caldwell St near side door to church and HP parking spaces. DPW will investigate.
- St. Anthony’s Church- No curb cut in front of church. DPW will investigate

- Walk/Don't Walk Signals- The city does not have any chirpers for the visually impaired. DPW has asked their traffic signal contractor for a quote to install chirpers at Main/Mechanic when the Walk/Don't Walk signals are reinstalled.

Amy will follow up with Lenny on where he stands with the issues addressed above in Item 5.

**Item 6:** Disability Awareness Event: The commission reviewed the citywide Disability Awareness Event held in April at Fitchburg High School. We also discussed how to get a better turnout for families to attend the event briefly. A meeting will be held in August to discuss the event in detail and pre-plan for next year's event.

**Item 7:** Commission Structure: The commission discussed the roles of each member. Amy stated that traditionally the commission should have a Chair, A vice Chair, and a secretary. In the recent years, the commission voted for a non-traditional structure to have a co-chair to meet the needs of the commission.

There are three potential new members coming into the commission based on approval from the Mayor's office. In our July meeting, the commission will revisit the chair & vice- chair positions, as it is the beginning of new fiscal year.

Requirements from the city:

Agenda must be posted a minimum of 48 hours before the meeting. We need to allow the city time to post so we should plan to submit the agenda a minimum of 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Amy has to post the agenda and minutes on the city website.

Minutes & agenda has to be submitted on a timely basis

Annual Report - Accomplishments for the year need to be reported to the city by the end of June 2016.

The commission decided that the go to Person- to draft letters for the commission - (As Friends of the Commission - will be Kathy Hamelin)

The commission passed a motion to appoint Sheela Tallamraju as the secretary for the disability commission.

The commission passed a motion for a special meeting in August 2016.

**Item 8:** New Business - Bill added the Fitchburg airport is building a new building. (Restaurant/Tower) and are following the ADA guidelines.

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 A.M.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for July 13, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the library Garden Room.